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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [KTFN](#) [EUN](#) [USEU](#) [BRUSSELS](#)

SUBJECT: OCTOBER 15 US-EU COTER TROIKA REVIEWS COMMON GOALS  
AND JOINT ACTIONS

REF: A. USEU 4475

[1](#)B. STATE 221188

[1](#)C. STATE 218685

Classified By: USEU Poloff Van Reidhead for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: The October 15 U.S.-EU COTER counterterrorism (CT) Troika focused on EU plans to identify priority countries for CT assistance. Dutch CT Coordinator and COTER Chair Ambassador Mollinger reviewed recent visits to Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Morocco and Indonesia. S/CT Director for Regional Affairs and U.S. Chairman Hartley welcomed the COTER initiative, agreed in principle to seek to coordinate CT assistance programs, but urged that, once the COTER has identified areas of assistance, coordination take place among embassies in the capitals concerned. EU officials reviewed implementation of the EU CT work plan, including efforts to mainstream CT policy in EU external relations, streamline the production of threat assessments, harmonize national CT policies, and implement the March Declaration. The two sides also reviewed global CT developments, agreed to consider a second round of joint demarches to encourage countries that have not already done so to ratify the 12 UN CT conventions and protocols, discussed the draft Council of Europe CT conventions, and exchanged views on terrorist recruitment. The U.S. raised the libyan arms embargo issue and Hizballah. The Luxembourg representative outlined his government's plans for COTER during its spring 2005 EU Presidency. Delegations agreed in principle to meet early in 2005, with the exact date to be determined. END SUMMARY.

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EU FOCUSES ON PRIORITY COUNTRIES  
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[1](#)2. (C) Dutch CT Coordinator and COTER Chair Ambassador Ronald Mollinger noted that the implementation of the EU Action Plan on terrorism has encouraged the EU to look more "toward external policies and less toward internal procedures." Two resulting actions have been the focus on seven priority countries (Morocco, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Tunisia and Kenya), and greater cooperation between external and internal affairs (Second and Third "Pillar") experts within the EU COTER framework. Mollinger said that he and EU CT Coordinator Gijs de Vries had recently visited Morocco, and that he (Mollinger) had also visited Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Indonesia, to discuss EU technical assistance, intelligence sharing, and political support for CT cooperation with the EU. He said each of the countries had welcomed the prospect of greater CT cooperation with the EU (although Algeria complained that the EU had not helped more at an earlier stage). The COTER group is trying to identify three more priority countries to round out their list at ten and solicited U.S. views.

[1](#)3. (C) Consistent with Ref C, Hartley welcomed the COTER initiative, agreed in principle to seek to coordinate CT assistance programs, but urged that, once the COTER has identified areas of assistance, coordination take place among embassies in the capitals concerned. Citing the U.S. G-8 Presidency experience, he said U.S. Embassies in several of the priority countries identified by the EU were already working with other donors to coordinate and deconflict CT assistance programs. Coordination at the embassy level would take advantage of embassies familiarity with the assistance already in train, deeper understanding of the local political context, and an appreciation of the unique challenges in each country regarding program implementation. He noted a number of countries in East Asia, South Asia, the Near East and Africa that would be logical candidates to fill out the EU top ten list. The EU side agreed that cooperation in the field is the most effective venue for coordination.

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EU VISITS TO PRIORITY COUNTRIES  
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[1](#)4. (C) Mollinger provided detailed read-outs on his visits to Morocco, Algeria, Indonesia, and Saudi Arabia:

MOROCCO: Morocco had a mixed response to the EU, with few officials making specific requests. Moroccan officials viewed AQ as an ideological inspiration and not a direct threat to Morocco. During the discussion, it emerged that

Morocco had requested EU assistance with border controls even as the U.S. is moving forward to implement the Terrorist Interdiction Program (TIP) to assist GOM establishment of a computerized port-of-entry name check system..

SAUDI ARABIA: The Commission noted that Saudi Arabia's wealth made the country ineligible for Commission assistance.

EU officials relayed Saudi concerns about the potential influx of jihadists back into the country once Iraq is stabilized. Hartley acknowledged that this could be a problem, but pointed out that the Saudis were making important gains in their CT capabilities and that coalition forces were working hard to ensure that such jihadists would be apprehended or killed before they have the chance to leave Iraq.

ALGERIA: Algeria was enthusiastic about receiving technical assistance from the EU, but also vocal in its grievances about what it saw as passive EU involvement until now. The EU reminded us that the Association Agreement with Algeria contains a terrorism clause, but Algeria has not yet ratified the agreement.

INDONESIA: Indonesia told the EU visitors "they are fed up with fact finding missions" and hoped instead for some real assistance. Hartley noted ongoing USG CT capacity-building assistance and recent developments, in particular the recent election of President Yudhoyono, who has given positive signals on CT cooperation.

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NEW THREAT ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES CENTRALIZE COOPERATION  
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15. (C) EU officials related their developing approach to threat assessments. Instead of drawing on individual member state intelligence service reports on particular countries and themes, COTER has asked the EU Situation Centre (SitCen) to synthesize all available information, including from Europol, and present coordinated assessments to the COTER group. The Dutch hope to have eleven foreign intelligence and internal security services pooling information at SitCen by the end of December (the number is currently at seven).

16. (SBU) The EU is also working on a peer review process to identify and universalize best practices in CT policies throughout the 25 member states. A report on best practices for CT from this evaluation will be released during the December JHA European Council meeting. The new member states will participate in the evaluation venture at a later date.

17. (SBU) EU Counter-terrorism coordinator Gijs de Vries' Deputy, Patricia Holland, said that the EU is engaging in a larger effort to "mainstream" CT concerns throughout all EU policy areas. On terrorism financing, Holland said the EU would soon release an overview paper on terrorist financing policies in the EU.

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TERRORISM FINANCE  
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18. (SBU) Both the US and the EU noted the productive discussion on terrorism finance that had taken place on September 23 and reported on the four key areas for our future work: (1) a meeting with prosecutors, investigators and designation authorities to be held before the end of the year to share experience and best practices; (2) enhanced US-EU cooperation in FATF especially on non-profits and cash couriers; (3) continuation of the informal dialogue and (4) cooperation on CTF technical assistance.

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OTHER ISSUES  
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19. (C) The two sides also discussed the following topics:

-- Global Trends: Hartley reviewed global developments, noting the progress made to date to defeat al-Qaida and associated terrorist groups but underscoring the continuing threat. Acknowledging that international efforts to identify and neutralize AQ cells worldwide had made significant progress, Dutch Internal Security Service officer Willem van Sluys said that the EU remained very worried about the ongoing capabilities and recruitment skills of AQ cells, especially in Europe. The EU was also concerned that AQ was evolving into more of an ideology with a declining need for a base, which added new challenges for CT officials.

-- Joint Demarches: The two sides agreed to consider a second round of joint demarches, begun under the Italian EU Presidency, to urge third countries to ratify and implement the twelve UN CT conventions and protocols. The U.S. side undertook to propose next steps.

-- Council of Europe Draft CT Convention: USEU DOJ Attache Mark Richard said he understood a draft comprehensive CT convention had been tabled at the Council of Europe, despite a prior understanding that the largely redundant proposal had been dropped. Troika officials confirmed that the EU did not have a common position on the draft and that several prominent EU member states oppose it. The Luxembourg Rep read a statement from an EU coordination meeting in New York in which member states agreed that any new convention should focus on filling existing gaps and should not seek to reframe existing conventions.

-- Terrorist Recruitment: Hartley described USG concerns about terrorist recruitment in US prisons and among military chaplains. Dutch internal security service official van Sluys said the EU remained concerned about recruitment from within immigrant communities. While EU member states had taken aggressive action to halt recruitment in places such as schools and mosques, more needed to be done to engage Muslim moderates to provide an alternative to radicalization. He offered to share an EU Action Plan for combating terrorist recruitment, which should be finished by December.

-- Libya: Hartley also delivered US concerns (Ref B) regarding the EU decision to lift its arms embargo on Libya (details in Ref A).

-- Hizballah: Hartley raised ongoing U.S. concerns regarding lack of EU consensus on designating Hizballah and Hamas-linked charities as terrorist organizations. The EU side indicated that movement on either front was not likely in the near term.

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LUXEMBOURG PRESIDENCY PRIORITIES  
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110. (SBU) Luxembourg Rep Tom Berend highlighted five COTER priorities for Luxembourg's EU Presidency (January 1-June 30, 2005): enhancing CT assistance to third countries; building on the Dutch efforts to tackle terrorism finance; preparing for ministerials; and having productive troikas with third countries. The fifth priority will be "thematic" but has not yet been agreed.

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NEXT MEETING  
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111. (SBU) The two sides agreed in principle to meet again early in the new year (date to be determined).

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112. (U) PARTICIPANTS  
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U.S. Delegation:  
Brent Hartley, S/CT Director for Regional Affairs  
Kimber Shearer, EUR/ERA  
Mark Richard, Department of Justice Counselor, USEU  
Frank Kerber, Narcotics and Law Enforcement Counselor, USEU  
Van Reidhead, Political Officer, USEU  
Jennifer Underwood, Economic Officer, USEU  
Sean Kimball, Intern, USEU

Dutch Presidency Delegation:  
Ambassador Ronald Mollinger, MFA (COTER Chair)  
Wouter Jurgens, MFA  
Nadine van Loon, MFA  
Willem van Sluys, Internal Security Service

European Commission:  
Lars-Erik Lundin, DG External Relations  
Andrew Denison, DG External Relations  
Diederick Paalman, DG JHA

Luxembourg:  
Robert Rollinger, MFA  
Stephane Aumer, MFA  
Taru Berend, MFA

Council Secretariat:  
Patricia Holland, Advisor to EU CT Coordinator  
Margarita Comomala, USA Desk  
Alessandra Baldi, USA/CT Desk  
Juan de Luis, CT Desk

113. (U) This message has been cleared by S/CT Hartley and EUR/ERA Shearer.

Schnabel